

public policy in this country, and I ask that the Conference of Mayors' very cogent resolution be printed here.

JOSEPH L. NELLIS, FORMER CHIEF
COUNSEL OF HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON THE JUDICIARY

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay respect to Joseph L. Nellis, 87, former Chief Counsel of the House Judiciary Committee during the early 1980s, who passed away July 10 from congestive heart failure at his home in Northwest Washington, DC. He also served as Chief Counsel of the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, and Associate Counsel of the Kefauver Committee (the U.S. Senate Committee to Investigate Crime in Interstate Commerce). Joe was also a prominent local businessman, Democratic Party insider, and Washington area resident for more than 60 years. In addition to his public service on Capitol Hill, he argued a number of landmark cases before the Nation's highest courts, developed downtown properties, and founded the G.E.M. (Government Employees Mart) Department Stores.

Born in 1916 in Minsk in what is now Belarus, Joe grew up in Chicago and attended the University of Michigan, the University of Wisconsin, and Northwestern University's School of Law. He moved to the Washington area to work at the Office of Price Administration and Control in 1944.

His service as a Captain in the Army Air Corps during World War II was marked by several decorations, including one for work with the cryptology team that broke the Japanese Navy's secret code and led to the American victory at Midway.

Following a stint at the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) guiding post-war relief efforts in Greece and Italy in the late 1940's, he returned to Washington to enter private practice. In late 1949, Senator Estes Kefauver (D-Tennessee) called him and asked, "Joe, I'm about to get the Senate to pass a resolution authorizing an investigation of organized crime. It's never been done before. Why don't you come up to the Hill and help me chase some gamblers?" Nellis became associate counsel and the youngest member of the first Senate investigation into the activities of organized crime in interstate commerce. He achieved instant recognition among audiences nationwide when the committee's New York hearings—featuring such legendary mob figures as Virginia Hill and mafia boss Frank Costello—became the first nationally televised congressional hearings. After conducting a 2:00 a.m. "secret" deposition of entertainer Frank Sinatra regarding his connection with then-exiled mob boss Lucky Luciano, Joe determined that calling Sinatra as a public witness would not further the mission of the committee and might only serve to damage Sinatra.

Joe was a prominent advisor to Presidential candidates, including former Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson, and Senator Kefauver during both his 1952 and 1956 bids for the Democratic Party Presidential nomination. In 1968,

he served as Deputy Director of Citizens for Humphrey-Muskie. For a number of years, Joe was also a friend and advisor to Eleanor Roosevelt and later served as general counsel for the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation.

In private law practice, Nellis argued major civil and corporate cases. He challenged the constitutionality of the DC abortion statute in the first abortion rights case accepted for argument before the U.S. Supreme Court (*United States v. Milan Vuitch*, 1971). In a newspaper interview, Joe commented, "The key questions here are: does a woman have an absolute right to control the reproductive processes of her own body, . . . and does her physician have the freedom to prescribe medical treatment as he sees fit, without vague threats of prosecution for a felony?" He then played a role in the successful argument of *Roe v. Wade* by assisting the attorneys to prepare for their appearance before the Court.

Joe was also the author of numerous articles in professional and popular journals and coauthor of *The Private Lives of Public Enemies* (McKay, 1974 and Dell, 1974). Surviving family includes his wife, Muriel, sons David M. Nellis and Adam Pressman, daughters Barbara Nellis and Amy Pressman, and nine grandchildren. Because the House Judiciary Committee is a family of sorts, I would like to recognize Joe's extended family.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, we have lost a former Hill staffer who served the House and Senate for many years with distinction on critical issues to this country.

TRIBUTE TO CORPORAL MATTHEW
BOISVERT OF TYNGSBORO, MAS-
SACHUSETTS

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a brave Marine from my District, Corporal Matthew Boisvert of Tyngsboro, Massachusetts, for his patriotic service to our country. Matthew has twice been deployed to Iraq, where he performed courageously as a squad leader in Um-Qasar and the volatile town of Fallujah.

On August 17, tragedy struck when a roadside bomb tore through the humvee Matthew was patrolling in, leaving him critically wounded. But despite his injuries, Matthew's spirits have remained high and his faith strong. The first words out of his mouth to his mother were not those of anger or sadness, but rather concern for the well-being of his fellow Marines back in Iraq.

Matthew knew the risks of war when he enlisted in the Marine Corps the summer after high school. But he was willing to make the sacrifice necessary to defend his country and protect our democratic ideals. At the young age of 18, he left his friends and family behind to endure the harsh realities of a war-torn land. Our Nation, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, are humbled and grateful for his sacrifice.

Tonight, I plan to visit Matthew at Bethesda Naval Hospital to thank him for his honorable service. I am certain that all of our colleagues will join me in expressing our heartfelt grati-

tude for his courage and wishing him well as he begins to recover from his injuries. I will renew my commitment to him, and to all of our troops stationed overseas, to ensure that they have the equipment and the support they need to perform their duties. These brave Soldiers, Marines, and Airmen are on the front lines defending our national security. We owe it to them to provide the protection they deserve. And when these heroes return home, we must afford them the support, the respect, and the honor they have earned.

VERMONT RESIDENT WINS THE
ROBERT PENN WARREN AWARD
FOR POETRY

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to commend a Vermont resident, Harriet McGraw, known to her friends as Hatsie, for winning the Robert Penn Warren Award for poetry. Her poem, "Neighbors in the North End," was selected as the best of 853 submissions in a competition which saw entrants from 252 poets from 42 states and foreign nations. The competition was sponsored by the New England Writers Conference.

Hatsie McGraw lives in Windsor and works in nearby Springfield, where she is the librarian at the Park Street School. She represents part of what is best about our state: an ongoing creativity that is the hallmark of much in Vermont, a creativity which brings forth not just poetry but handbuilt furniture, innovative small businesses, and popular music. As just one instance of that creativity let me cite her husband Tom, a painter whose works in mixed media were recently exhibited in a show of his work, "Elements of Diversion," at the New England Gallery.

We in Vermont are proud of Hatsie McGraw, and of the countless thousands like her who move ever onward in search of new things to do, new heights to scale, new skills to put to use.

HONORING PARKS CHAPEL AFRICAN
METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Parks Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church of Oakland, California for 85 years of ministry and invaluable service to the community.

Parks Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in September 1919 as a mission in West Oakland by the late Reverend J.M. Brown. The church was named in honor of the late Bishop H.B. Parks of Oakland, and was granted a charter in May of 1920. The Congregation's membership has grown steadily over the years, leading it to relocate to larger worship sites twice before settling at its current location on Thirty-Fourth Street in Oakland under the spirited and inspired leadership of Reverend Donna E. Allen.